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SUBJECT: INTERNATIONAL EDUCATION WEEK 2006 IN KUWAIT

11. SUMMARY: For the second consecutive year, Embassy Kuwait expanded outreach activities geared towards students and youth during International Education Week, November 11 to 17, 2006. Public Affairs staff arranged two interviews for the Ambassador on a youth-oriented television program and a popular early morning talk show, in which he stressed the importance of educational exchanges for the future of U.S.-Kuwaiti relations. The Ambassador also opened the Linden Tours and U.S. Education Group education fairs organized by AMIDEAST, where representatives from more than 40 American universities, fielded questions from hundreds of Kuwaiti students and their parents about study in the U.S. Embassy Consular Officers were a notable presence at the fairs, managing queries on student visa related issues and briefing prospective students, admissions officers and conference organizers about the student visa process. (Note: a copy of the Consular section's new "Guide to Student Visas" briefing is available on Post's public website for students and educators. End note). Public Affairs staff hosted a DVC between students in Kuwait and faculty and students from Ashland University-Ohio. A number of DVCs were hosted between Kuwaiti and American students, including one featuring Dr. Calvin Mackie and one of his classes at Tulane University. The Ambassador concluded this year's recognition of International Education Week with an op-ed on education in the U.S. that prominently appeared in five Kuwaiti English- and Arabic-language dailies. END SUMMARY.

Connecting with Youth Audiences

12. On November 6, 2006, AMIDEAST organized the U.S. Education Group educational fair, where representatives from American universities took questions from Kuwaiti students and distributed colorful brochures and information about their institutions. The Ambassador cut the ribbon at the Marina Hotel event, opening the second U.S. education fair in Kuwait in less than a week. The event featured recruiters from 23 American colleges and universities, AMIDEAST staff, Public Affairs personnel and Consular Officers, all of whom addressed general questions about study in the U.S. and student visas. According to U.S.E.G. figures, more than 800 students rallied to the Ambassador's remarks that encouraged more Kuwaiti students to take advantage of the excellent educational opportunities that await them in the U.S. Students were particularly interested in visa processing times at Post.

Press coverage of the U.S.E.G. fair:

--11/08/06, Al-Anbaa, p. 12, 1/4 page, 3 photos, (circ. 40,000), Arabic
--11/08/06, Al-Watan, p. 26, 1/4 page, 1 photo, (circ. 65,000), Arabic
--11/08/06, Al-Rai Al-Aam, p. 12, 1/8 page, 2 photos, (circ. 80,000), Arabic

--11/08/06, A-Qabas, p. 28, 1/8 page, 1 photo, (circ. 65,000),
Arabic
--11/07/06, Kuwait Times, p. 8, 1/4 page, 1 photo, (circ. 35,000),
English
--11/07/06, Arab Times, p. 7, 1/4 page, 1 photo, (circ. 40,000),
English

¶3. On November 11, the Ambassador opened Linden Tours education fair in Kuwait. The third such fair in Kuwait this month, and the second organized within a week by AMIDEAST, the event featured recruiters from more than 20 American colleges and universities who distributed materials about their schools and helped students walk through the application process. Again, Public Affairs and Consular staff provided general information about studying in the U.S. and obtaining student visas, while the Ambassador highlighted the many diverse education programs offered by American colleges and universities in his remarks. More than 400 students and parents attended the fair.

Press coverage of the Linden Tours event:

--11/13/06, Al-Anbaa, p. 12, 1/8 page, 1 photo, (circ. 40,000),
Arabic
--11/13/06, Al-Watan, p. 28, 1/2 page, 3 photos, (circ. 65,000),
Arabic
--11/13/06, Al-Rai Al-Aam, p. 10, 1/4 page, 4 photos, (circ.
80,000), Arabic
--11/13/06, Al-Qabas, p. 26, 1/8 page, 1 photo, (circ., 65,000),
Arabic
--11/15/06, The Daily Star, p. 14, 1/4 page, 5 photos, (circ.
15,000), English

Reaching all Ages

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¶4. In the early hours of November 12, 2006, Public Affairs staff organized the Ambassador's appearance on the popular morning talk show "Good Morning Kuwait" on Kuwait TV that has a strong following by professionals in the 35-50 plus age group. He spoke about educational opportunities in the U.S., the importance of International Education Week, efforts to streamline the visa process, and the importance of such exchanges for the future of U.S.-Kuwaiti relations.

¶5. That evening, Public Affairs arranged for the Ambassador to address Kuwaiti youth on the privately owned satellite channel Al-Rai Television's "Raikum Shabab" ("Your Opinion Youth"). The trendy, well-liked daily program's target audience is Kuwaitis aged 15 to 30. The signal, however, extends beyond Kuwait and purportedly is viewed regularly by more than 200,000 young people in the Arabian Gulf region. During his appearance, the Ambassador promoted educational opportunities in the U.S. and tackled questions sent to the program via email and cellular phone SMS text messaging, including inquiries on life in the U.S. and the student visa application process.

Educational Messages for Varied Targets

¶6. On November 14, the Public Affairs Section of the U.S. Embassy hosted a DVC with Ashland University in Ohio. Participants from Kuwait included AMIDEAST's Access Microscholarship and YES Program students interacting with Ashland University's faculty and students. Topics discussed included student life, visa procedures, academic programs, and specialized English-language programs.

¶7. Both the Embassy's IRC Director and AMIDEAST's Acting Country Director promoted the November 17 Web chat titled "Education in America" with education expert Andrew Rotherham to Kuwaiti students interested in study in the U.S. On the same day, PAO arranged for the Ambassador to deliver remarks via DVC to the Fulbright Symposium in San Antonio, Texas. The Ambassador underscored the importance of Embassy educational outreach activities and educational reform efforts in Kuwait, and the need to foment ties between U.S. and

Kuwaiti academic institutions. Dr. Patricia Lemay Burr at University of the Incarnate Word organized the forum that included the university's president.

Better Late than Never

¶8. On November 21, CAO Kuwait conducted a DVC previously scheduled to take place during International Education Week for more than 35 students from American University of Kuwait, Gulf University of Science and Technology and student patrons of Amideast to hear about study in the U.S. from Dr. Calvin Mackie of Tulane University. Dr. Mackie, a professor of engineering as well as a popular American motivational speaker and author, spoke of U.S. academic programs and college life.

¶10. PAO and cultural affairs staff conducted an hour-long presentation on Department educational initiatives, MEPI projects, and Embassy educational programs at the American Corner at American University of Kuwait on November 25. This program, postponed from the previous week, concluded the Embassy's recognition of International Education Week in Kuwait.

An Authoritative Final Touch

¶11. On November 26, all five Kuwaiti Arabic dailies published the full text of the Ambassador's op-ed piece encouraging Kuwaitis to study in the U.S.

The press coverage, which provoked responses by other writers, consisted of the following articles:

--11/26/06, Al-Watan, p. 28, 1 photo, (circ. 65,000), Arabic
--11/26/06, Al-Seyassah, p. 27, 1 photo, (circ. 40,000), Arabic
--11/26/06, Al-Rai, p. 18, 1/4 page, 1 photos, (circ. 80,000), Arabic
--11/26/06, Al-Anbaa, p. 9, 1/4 page, 1 photo, (circ. 40,000), Arabic
--11/26/06, Al-Qabas, p. 21, 1/4 page, 1 photo, (circ., 65,000), Arabic

TUELLER